

Managing Low Pathogenic Avian Influenza in Virginia

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is proactively assisting the Commonwealth of Virginia in managing a low pathogenic avian influenza outbreak in Harrisonburg, Va.

A task force of USDA personnel, including epidemiologists, veterinarians, animal health technicians, and program personnel from the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) and a logistical support team from the Forest Service, is onsite assisting the State with disease investigations on farms, carcass disposal, establishing preventative measures, epidemiology, general information systems, financial management support, reporting systems, and transportation. USDA's first priority is to work with Virginia and the poultry industry to contain the low pathogenic avian influenza outbreak and prevent its spread.

Low pathogenic avian influenza is not considered a reportable disease under the Organization International de Epizooties and poses no human health or food safety threat. Such outbreaks are typically managed by the affected State. However, USDA has proactively stepped in to assist Virginia in an effort to strengthen the federal-state partnership and help ensure the resources are managed appropriately and the current situation is effectively controlled and eradicated.

As with any situation such as this, there are numerous important partners at the Federal, State, and industry level. Assisting with Virginia's low pathogenic avian influenza outbreak are USDA's APHIS, Forest Service, Farm Services Agency, and Natural Resources Conservation Service and Virginia's Secretariat of Commerce and Trade, Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Secretariat of Natural Resources, and Department of Environmental Quality.

USDA values the role that industry plays in surveying for and managing poultry diseases and supports the poultry industry's efforts to strengthen and reinforce effective precautionary measures aimed at preventing the introduction and spread of low pathogenic avian influenza in U.S. flocks.

USDA is committed to partnering with States and industry to address threats to our Nation's agricultural health. Proactively assisting Virginia with its low pathogenic avian influenza outbreak is an opportunity to protect the overall health of U.S. poultry and ensure continued fair market access for U.S. poultry and poultry products to world markets.

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